IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace paragraph [0006] with the following amended paragraph:

[0006] There have been several techniques developed to reduce charging. One of them is to adjust the energy of the primary charged particles to a value where the emission rate of secondary charged particles balances the flux of the incoming charged particle beam, as described, e.g., in US Patent No. 6,066,849. In this case, excess charge in the regions of beam incidence can be kept close to zero. However, this technique does not allow the energy of the charged particle beam to be freely chosen which in turn excludes many useful applications in the field of charged particle beam microscopy and structuring.

Please replace paragraph [0008] with the following amended paragraph:

[0008] It should be mentioned that the use of a gas supply system near the specimen is not limited to a decharging of the specimen. Instead, the gas may also be used to interact with the specimen in some other way. [[E.g.]] For example, the gas may be used to etch the specimen or to provide a material layer (vapor deposition) in the region where the charged particle beam impinges onto the specimen.

Please replace paragraph [0092] with the following amended paragraph:

[0092] Fig. 3b discloses another type of tube plate. In this example, the tube plate 22 consists of silicon through which holes or pores of a given diameter are etched. The length of the holes, L, is defined by the thickness of the silicon wafer from which the tube plate is taken. The wafers can be as thick as several hundred micrometers. The diameter of the holes, D, is defined by the etching parameters that generate the holes. The etching of holes in silicon is described, e.g. in the ~~US-patent~~ US Patent No. 5,139,624. ~~US-patent~~ US Patent No. 5,139,624 discloses an electrolytic etching of silicon which allows the pores to be etched through the wafer with pore diameters that can be chosen to be in the range between 20 angstroms to several micrometers.